

Arizona's Regional Approach to Homeland Security

In 2004, Governor Napolitano announced a regional focus to homeland security for Arizona. Five homeland security regions were identified to ensure the state – through the Regional Advisory Councils – strengthen its ability to work together at all levels to address common threat and vulnerability issues and encourage sharing of resources across local jurisdictional borders.

Arizona was one of the first states to develop a regional approach to homeland security, which the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has highlighted as a “vital step” in state homeland security efforts. Identifying resources and needs at regional levels throughout the State helps avoid duplicative purchases and makes the best use of limited federal funding.

Arizona's five homeland security regions include:

Eastern Region:	Pinal, Gila, Graham and Greenlee counties.
Southern Region:	Yuma, Pima, Santa Cruz and Cochise counties
Northern Region:	Coconino, Navajo and Apache counties
Western Region:	Mohave, Yavapai and La Paz counties
Central Region:	Maricopa County

Each region is represented by a Regional Advisory Council (RAC). The RACs are comprised of first responders and local elected officials that live or work in these regions, including: two members from fire service (one rural, one urban); one police chief; one sheriff; one member from tribal government; one emergency manager; one mayor; one county supervisor; two at large members from the public and private sector; and an ad hoc member from both the Arizona Department of Public Safety and county public health. It is through these RACs that homeland security projects are initially prioritized and approved.

Through a regional approach to preparedness, Arizona has been able to establish layered detection, prevention, response and recovery capabilities. Prior to the establishment of RACs, Arizona's 15 counties distributed the state's allotment of federal homeland security grant funds to towns, cities and tribes.